

Western Kentucky University
TopSCHOLAR®

WKU Archives Records

WKU Archives

3-14-1966

UA3/3/1 Comments on Activities at the Western Kentucky University Farm

Larry Mutter

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/dlsc_ua_records



Part of the [Agricultural Education Commons](#), [Curriculum and Instruction Commons](#), [Dairy Science Commons](#), and the [Other Animal Sciences Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Mutter, Larry, "UA3/3/1 Comments on Activities at the Western Kentucky University Farm" (1966). *WKU Archives Records*. Paper 3231.

http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/dlsc_ua_records/3231

This Report is brought to you for free and open access by TopSCHOLAR®. It has been accepted for inclusion in WKU Archives Records by an authorized administrator of TopSCHOLAR®. For more information, please contact connie.foster@wku.edu.

COMMENTS ON ACTIVITIES
AT
THE WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY FARM

By Larry Mutter
March 14, 1966

The main functions of the University Farm should be four-fold: It should be used as a laboratory for classes, demonstrations for farmers, applied and fundamental research, and for farm group meetings.

The various enterprises should be self-supporting, except those portions used for teaching and research. There are many phases of the farm operation that lend themselves to very useful research and demonstration data. There are various expenses which we should anticipate that the average farm will not have. These expenses are such as road up-keep, white fences, and expenditures to keep the buildings in the very best of condition. These items are a necessity for us since we must keep an attractive farm with well-kept roads for the public to travel when visiting the farm.

The crops grown on the farm should be those used on the farm and those for which the land is best suited. Since this is a forage and grain farm, the best utilization of the land would be to go to hay production, silage and grain, with perhaps a very small plot of tobacco. Much of the back portion of the farm is well suited to continuous cropping. We do have a major Johnson Grass problem on approximately one-third of the farm. This land should be put into silage corn, followed by small grain rotational. A ten-acre section was used last year by the Kentucky Department of Agriculture for Johnson Grass eradication. Another section will be used this year.

The livestock enterprises at present are dairying and beef. During the past month both the dairy and beef herds have undergone a severe culling of unprofitable free-loafers. This has reduced the dairy herd to 65 milking cows. There are other individuals which should be sold after milking their peak production. Those livestock enterprises most suited to the farm and community should be maintained. Therefore, I recommend that we maintain a dairy unit of 80-100 cows, a 20-cow beef herd, and that we add a swine enterprise when our cropping program justifies this addition. I do not think that we should reduce the size of our dairy herd or beef herd below this level. I believe we should depend on the herds of the community to use in sheep and poultry classes. We couldn't possibly have all phases of livestock and do a good job in all of them. So why not do a top job with two or three instead of a half-way job with all.

The herd should be used in training the dairy judging team and in judging schools for 4-H and FFA students. We should be, and can be, of great service to South Central Kentucky.

The appearance of our farm could be greatly improved by the removal of the highway department's supplies from right in front of the farm. We should have a clean and appealing front entrance to the farm. The woven-wire fence around the front pasture should be replaced with a white plank fence. We need to present an atmosphere of welcome to all visitors.

We have one of the most useful Agriculture Centers in the South. This building should be used by meeting groups, shows, sales, and college functions. The building is used quite frequently at present, but could be used more efficiently.

We do not have adequate good farm personnel at present to do an adequate job with many of our farm enterprises. During the last month I have hired student labor in the dairy operation. This not only gives better personnel, but it gives these boys very valuable experience. This should be one of the reasons for maintaining the farm. The two-year program in Agriculture should be centered around our farm operation. These students should work with different phases of farming so that they will be more capable of going out and managing a farm. I would like to furnish employment during the summer months for students with livestock and cropping programs.

The farm should be a model for farmers in this area. Many practices should be done by Western to show farmers that these things are possible and economical. We should employ stored feeding year around with the dairy herd. Good dairymen are all looking in this direction. Anyone who knows anything about managing a farm will tell us that with the University Farm we need to make maximum use of the land by going to dry lot feeding. For example, the entire roughage should be provided in dry lot, either by green chop, silage, or hay. It is very uneconomical to pasture land like that on the farm.

In summarizing the future enterprises of the University Farm, I think we need to maintain an 80-100 cow dairy herd, not less than a 20-cow beef herd, and an economical swine enterprise. Do not set up poultry or sheep as we do not want to spread ourselves too thin. Go to as much stored feeding as possible with the dairy herd. Develop demonstrations for the public and always maintain an atmosphere of welcome to the public.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CHANGES AND IMPROVEMENTS ON THE UNIVERSITY FARM

LIVESTOCK

The dairy herd has been reduced due to careful culling of unprofitable individuals. We should not reduce our herd any further. The dairy operation should be the money-making enterprise on the farm. In order to do this, we should maintain eighty to one hundred milking cows at all times. Since the milk base is established during the months of September through January, we need to be near maximum production during these months. The herd was at its lowest level of production last fall, therefore I have purchased 800 pounds of additional milk base.

I recommend that since we only have two Jersey cows and five heifers that we add a few outstanding individuals this year. I would like to spend the \$750.00 allotted for purchase of a Brown Swiss bull for some heifers in the Kentucky Jersey Heifer Spring Sale at Glasgow on April 23, 1966.

The beef herd will be reduced to twenty cows this next week. All of the herd will be bred to the present polled bull. We will need to add a young polled bull in the next year or two to breed young replacement heifers. In the future we should think along the lines of owning a top bull in partnership with another breeder, thus giving us a superior animal for possibly less cost than we now have invested in a herd sire. Since we can breed by artificial insemination it gives us a chance to use individuals much superior to our present herd sire. The beef unit should be maintained at 20-25 cow units for the present time.

A small scale feeding operation using beef and dairy steers should be set up on the farm. We could add additional income by feeding our dairy steers instead of selling them at birth. But before we do this we need to have a grain supply to justify this phase of operation.

A swine herd should be established on the farm in the next few years. This will mean an additional outlay of investment. The size of the unit would depend on the amount of grain being produced at the time.

We should utilize the knowledge of sheep and poultry producers in Warren County for the sheep and poultry classes.

Animals of both the beef and dairy herds should be entered in shows and sales. There is no reason why Western could not have the top animal in many of the shows and sales. This would also afford us a real opportunity for recruiting agriculture students. The students would gain much knowledge and experience in helping fit and show these animals. A practice should be made of selling animals in breed-supported sales, and we should support these sales by purchasing a top individual from time to time.

Crops: Need to get corn crop out at least by April 20 in order to get ahead of drought which is very common to soils on the University Farm. There is a big Johnson Grass problem on the farm, so if we get the silage corn out very early we can get ahead of much of the Johnson Grass.

The cost of Johnson Grass control is cost-sharing with ASC, so the farm should take advantage of this program. Control plots were used by Kentucky Department of Agriculture last year and will be used again this year.

An orchard should be established for use by the Agriculture Department in teaching Horticulture. An economical landscaping should be undertaken, especially for the front of the farm.

A better use of the farm needs to be made by the soils and crop classes. Such a program is in operation this semester.

The crops should be set up to use different varieties and different levels of fertilization to serve as demonstrations for classes and public meetings.

General appearance of farm facilities: Need to improve farm housing by installation of white aluminum siding and several minor repairs.

Need to rock the roads annually for the next few years to get a rock base established on these new roads. The new front entrance-way is scheduled to be built this spring.

Relocation of Highway Department equipment.

The water supply on the farm is very unsatisfactory. The community water system should be encouraged as much as possible.

The present buildings are in most cases sufficient. There is need for repair on one of the stock barns and an addition of free stalls to the front barns. At least one additional silo is needed at present. There is need to remodel the inside of two barns so they can be given maximum usage as calf barns. If and when the swine operation is added we will need buildings for this enterprise.

In order to do research and study growth rates of farm animals we will need to purchase a set of livestock scales.

There is need for a pick-up truck and a two-ton truck on the farm. The pick-up is needed for the Director of Farm Operations so that he can pick up supplies when needed and can travel over the farm to do a better job of management. A large truck is needed for heavy farm hauling of livestock, lumber, and sawdust for bedding, and may be used in hauling the cattle to shows and sales.